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RECENT BOOKS ON ART SUBJECTS

A book worthy of the author's fame and the reader's curiosity is "Watteau" by Camille Mauclair. This eminent art writer does full justice to his entertaining subject but further arouses our interest by entering into a metaphysical question as to how far Watteau's physical weakness—he died at the age of 37 of tuberculosis— influenced his art. Mr. Mauclair is too clever to allow his pet notion, that Watteau's art was subservient to his disease, to monopolize the pages of his book, still he devotes much space to this speculation. The book is full of entertaining and instructive matter. The author weakens his argument in his last chapter where he alludes to a series of consumptive intellects and artists whose genius is akin to Watteau's. When he calls Mozart, Bonington, Schubert and Chopin as witnesses he misses his cue—how—that is for the reader to decide, and it is an interesting proposition.

The book forms one of E. P. Dutton's numbers in their Popular Library of Art. It is abundantly illustrated with half-tones after Watteau's most noted works, and may be had for 75 cents net.

In this day of artistic furnishings of the home it is to be remarked that the chaotic conditions of the past are crystallizing into systematic correctness. Interior decorators are beginning to learn a great deal—because they have to. Their customers demand some reasonable thought applied to the furnishing of their homes, as they are no longer satisfied with having their parlors converted into junkshops, or their bedrooms filled by contract.

Pure taste is at the bottom of home enjoyment—as far as this concerns the furnishing and decoration of the home this purity of taste must be formed by study and knowledge, and for a guide who knows, commend me to a book published by the Frederick A. Stokes Company of New York. It is entitled "Decorative Styles and Periods in the Home" by Helen Churchill Candee, the well-known writer.

The price of this useful book is \$2.00 net. Any critical querulousness which the title might arouse is obviated by a sentence occurring in the introduction of the book. This reads: "Periods are not so distinctly separated as inches on a yardstick or squares on a checker board; they shade one into the other more like the tints on a cloudless sunset sky." With this principle in mind we can accept with confidence the chapters that follow, devoted to various styles chronologically arranged. It is a valuable book of vast information, elucidated by a hundred or more illustrations. These are well selected and not the least important part of the work.

Simultaneous with the above there has appeared a book entitled "The Decorative Periods" by Chandler R. Clifford, published by Clifford & Lawton. This book treats of the same subject but along more historical lines, i. e., in its illustrations, which form two-thirds of the book. The text is formed by observations in a somewhat disconnected fashion, but full of valuable information. It may be had of the publishers in New York for \$3.00.

A philosopher of the beautiful is George Lansing Raymond L. H. D. of the George Washington University. In his "The Essentials of Aesthetics," published by G. P. Putnam's Sons (\$2.50 net), he leads us along his line of thinking to the full comprehension of the science of the beautiful—that is, if we are able to follow him through some very deep parts. The easiest chapter is the eighth, which concerns itself with "Art as representative rather than presentative of the personality of the artist"—but then, I may have been prejudiced because of a personal feeling of appreciation and application of a definition which occurs in that chapter. The author says: "The genius, therefore, is a man whose temperament makes him one of his kind, and therefore makes his products reflect the fact, in the sense of inclining him to be influenced as are other

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human beings, and as are also all the animate or unanimate developments of life that is not human." Now, who would say nay to that?

The book contains a good many illustrations, but as each one is marked to refer to from three to a dozen places in text pages, they add greatly to the labor of enjoyment.

Vasari was the multiplied Boswell of Italian artists. He was as prejudiced and biased as Dr. Johnson's biographer, with this difference, that having many subjects instead of one, he had the opportunity of letting his prejudice carry him sometimes to inimical judgment as well as to fulsome praise.

A careful selection of his stories has been made by E. L. Seeley, covering some thirty of the artists to whom Vasari devoted himself. It is an interesting anthology, in which Vasari's ingenuous style is carefully followed. The book is beautifully illustrated with eight colored reproductions and two dozen half tone plates after famous paintings by the artists mentioned. E. P. Dutton & Co. have put the book on the market in an unusually artistic manner, with title page and binding after pre-Renaissance designs. The price is \$3.00 net.

Men have at last come into their own, and of course a woman did it. Judging by a book entitled "Adam's Sons" there has been as much written about the lords of creation as about Eve's daughters. Some five hundred sentiments about men have been compiled by Leila Sprague Learned, and are found in promiscuous array on the pages of a book that is abundantly illustrated by A. G. Learned with marginal and full page drawings. These have no connection with the text—in fact the book seems more the reproduction of this illustrator's portfolio of sketches, the "sayings"—witty and otherwise—merely forming a side dish.

Learned is well-known as an illustrator of books and as a contributor to magazines and a collection of his drawings will

be acceptable to many. The volume is published by The Sparrell Art Co. of New York & Boston, at \$2.00.

D. C. P.

Always alluring, the announcement of a new sheaf of papers by Max Beerbohm, George Moore, Arthur Symons. And doubly so, in the case of the latter, when one of the arts of my alliterative title* is painting, when another is sculpture. Arthur Symons as a critic of the fine arts is invariably worthy of our attention and it is to be regretted that his favors are so few and far between: a brilliant essay on the rare decorations of the greatest master of black and white has stood, until now, the solitary piece of art criticism among a set of studies in literature, among several volumes of verse.

Laying aside for the moment the art of poetry, and the art of literature in general, Mr. Symons now concerns himself with the arts of painting, sculpture, architecture, music, handicraft, the stage, and dancing.

Very illuminating and suggestive are the critiques on Rodin, the essay on Whistler, the painting of the nineteenth century, Gustave Moreau, Watts: equally engaging the thoughts on Wagner, Duse, the pantomime and the ballet—I have here mentioned only somewhat more than half the titles, but enough, I fancy, to suggest the keen sense of discrimination in choice of subject disclosed by our critic.

From the essay on Duse the following quotation:—

"I have seen her before a Rodin, a Whistler, and a Turner. As she handled the little piece of clay, in which two figures, suggested, not expressed, embrace passionately, in a tightening quiver of the whole body, which seems to thrill under one's eyesight, it seemed as if force drank in force until the soul of the woman passed into the clay, and the soul of the clay passed into the woman. As she stood before the portrait of Carlyle, which she had never seen, though a photograph of it goes with her wherever she goes, there was

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the quiet of content, perfect satisfaction, before a piece of ardent and yet chastened perfection. As she moved about the room of the Turners, in the National Gallery, it was with little cries, with a sort of unquiet joy. ‘The dear madman!’ she repeated, before picture after picture . . .”

A. E. G.

* “Studies in Seven Arts,” by Arthur Symons, London: Archibald Constable & Co., Ltd.

Book Notes

The Collector and Art Critic Company have just published “Whistler: Notes and Footnotes,” by A. E. G., composed of sixteen essays by this well-known writer, six of which are upon various phases of the many-sided Whistler. The remaining nine range in subject from Leonardo to Everett Shinn, and as the author remarks in his foreword his preference is for the less familiar and the artistic byways in art.

Among the nine illustrations are two unpublished pictures by Whistler, including a study of poppies, the only flower picture Whistler is known to have made. This is reproduced in color and the other Whistler plate is done by the heliotype process.

The book is carefully written and carefully made.

Among the events of the season at the Merwin-Clayton rooms will be the coming sale of the Thomas Nast collection of cartoons, paintings and curios. Some of the cartoons were sold last season. They sell February 1 the Wellstood collection of prints, etc., including twelve original drawings by F. O. C. Darley.

P. F. Madigan has issued an absorbing list of first editions, etc., of the works of “Oscar Fingall O’Flaherty Wills Wilde,” including the excessively rare first edition, in French, of “Salome,” in the original purple wrappers.

A total of \$19,000 was realized last month from the sale by the Anderson Auction Company of the library and print collection of a well-known New Yorker.

For the books the highest prices paid were the following: A handsomely bound set of the first London edition of John Heneage Jesse’s Memoirs, \$126.50; an extra-illustrated reprint of the rare edition of the Fermiers-Generaux of La Fontaine’s “Contes et Nouvelles en vers,” \$340; a translation by A. Morel-Fatio of Diego Mendoza’s “Vie de Lagarillo de Formes,” \$170; the works of Molière, with Moreau’s illustrations, \$138; Abbe Prevost’s “Manon Lescaut,” with preface by Guy de Maupassant, Japan paper copy, \$110; “Les Confessions” of J. J. Rousseau, on Japan vellum paper, illustrated by Maurice Leloir, \$140; first editions of John Ruskin’s “Seven Lamps of Architecture,” “Stories of Venice,” and “Modern Painters,” \$202.50, and Edition de Bibliophile of W. C. Ford’s George Washington, extra illustrated, \$232.



Portrait by Irving R. Wiles of William H. Powell, son of the late historical painter. In the last exhibition of the Academy of Design